The following interesting letter was recently drawn from the Hon. REVERDY JOHNSON by some discussions which had sprung up in the New York Journal of Commerce touching certain critical transactions in the famous "Peace Convention" of 1861, which discussions seemed to demand the testimony of Mr. Johnson, a prominent member of the Convention. The letter possesses an historic interest as shedding light on one of the most important incidents in our political annals, and is valuable, moreover, for its bearing on the duty of all loyal men in the desolating and deadly struggle which now afflicts the country and engrosses all thoughts and aspira-WASHINGTON, MAY 13, 1863.

To the Editors of the Journal of Commerce :

To the Editors of the Journal of Commerce:

I sm biged to you for the co, y of Mr David Dudley
Fill b's letter to you, of the 21s of April last, published
by your paper of the succeeding day.

In the present condition of the country no advantage perhas conjue gained by recalling "the his ory of the Perce
Convention" but as Mr. F. has thought fit to discount in proper that the fact which to sta e. in regard to it, if error netus, should be corrected. As one of the members named by him as batting been raisfied with "the peace conference." I avail myself of the first lei-ure to give the fact as it was. This wil be done with to view to call in que stion the purposed accuracy of M . Field, but to set averalf right with those who may feel an interest in the subject. For

the purpose a few proliminary remarks are neces any.

The Convention assembled at the instance of Varginia, through remint one passe by her Gen tal Assembly out to 19th of Ja un 1, 1-61 Their presuble sets for h as " the controver y . high so divide- the Sates of the Confederacy shall be satisfactorily a just d a permanent dissolution of the Union is in vitable "

In this conviction the most, if n tall, of the Southern States were blev d to concor, and also very many of the onserning and reflecting e iz we of the Northern States Evidence of this was four dan the d bates in Congress, da cossions on the but ng., in the jubic press, and in many of the jupis of he country. However u just fiame, as of the jupies of he country. However u just fiame, as tilings then were, (if the desired adjustment was het ob-fained,) a reversion of the Union by force would be esleem d by the intelligent patrictism of the country, it was jet manifest from their ant cedents that there were men, North and S uth, who lo ked to such a result not only without rearet, but with hope and gladness. They were doubtless tew in each rection, but they were zerlous, reckwhich to delude and madd a the mind of the hone at masses stou d them Torse all good toys men were solicitous to deplies them o'; and have they were most anxious to place it way, the chief cause of much it, beyond their reach. Its the danger existed, not only manifested itself in the manier before stated but every proposit in officed in the Prece Convention, whether by Northern or Southern delegates, disclosed it.

1st, the sauce of the seven smendments to the Consti ution, rep r . d by a majo ity of the committee or which Mr. Guth is was chairm in, implied it.
2d. The mico by report by Mr. Baldwin, of Connecti

car, in terms almost, stated it. The presmb s of resulttions recommended by him said, "Whereas unhappy difforences exist which have alieuated from each other portions of the people of the Unio d State to such an extent as seriously to dis urb the pe ce of the nation."

The principle of legal null fication, asserted by Mr. Calnous in 1828, in a carefully prepared paper we led was m do the fundation of the nullifying ordinance of he btate of 1832 ws maintained in part, if not mainly, on the authority of the Kentucky and Virginia resolutions of 179:- 9. The folly of the co.t ine, its utter incousis ency with the very words and obj c's of the Constitution, were an obvious that neither the intellectual agut ness with which its au hor sus ported it, n r the influerce of his previously well exceed fome, nor the person eve authority of the great names of Jeff roon and M doon, could save it from almost universel condemnation in every State exce. t that of its ordine, and from the cond-unition of the pur at, brightest, and absent minds of South Carelina hereof. One of these, James L Pettigru, but recen l, token f om us to the deep regret of the nat on, unaism yed by the in ence t earon and francic violence ar und bim, safe from their danger by the shed of his sp these charact r. his sern courage and lifty patro i.m. to the very las of his st y on err h retained and boddy aroused his perfect logarty to the Government. Too wise to be ed a tray by the shellow tal ace a of the Rhetts and Ya ceys of the hour, and tou devoted to the happiness of his state a d country to t ke ne clung to the tai h of our fathers, and boldly Jenouse d he treason to which these conspirators invied, and by which they have, to their ruin, led their deluded followers. The doctr ne, therefore, so n f. ll into general di-repute.

and was finely, and to the grat fice int of the country, extiguished by the matchless tower and il queuce of Webster, and the stern patric ism and indominable will of It was demo strated by Mr. wads a him-elf, whose mind rema ned as clear as sunlight, in several let ters in '1831-'2, to be uttry unterable, and with no warrante the in the resolutions of '98-9 or in the report. th- wo k of his p n, mad- in defer ce of those of Virginia

more permissions one of secession was sub-tituted. But t mat with little layer. It fact it slept un herded. A portion, however, of its votaries designed at the first opportunity to make it work certain machie, and for mischie: only was it suited. The tariff no longer furnishing this opportunity, the plan was "to fire the by slavery egulation. The matitudian was so connected with their domestic c mfort a d so v.ta', as they thought, to their material wealth, was of such long and on i-turbstanding and so clearly recognised and protected by the Constitution itself, and had not only not been the cause of denger, but the source as they belt wild on their prosperty oltical p wer, and ab we all, its sudien termination and political p ware, and above all, its sudden termination would, in their judgment, he so fruitful of even the direct calant is, that to approach it with that end was sure to produce the stein as or error attout to reset the effort at all bezards, and to break, if it could not be oth rwise our o s-fully voromplahed, even the ties of a s ciation, of fraterral affection, and of love of country, which, until tien. national power.

's be piotiers on both sides, who had long wished and medica ed a dest uc ion of the Union for that purpo e, engerly cought at every chince to present and fan into ne this truttful top c of mirchief. With that view those to the South greatly ex ggerated the restalence of Northcon beats ty, writes there is the North did all they could to ad them. Whether by ar a g ment or not, they were in tack the allies of each other. They worked for the same end and by the same went send and by the same went send and by the same went send and the same went send o iduct of these comperatively few men that brought the to be when the Perce Convention assembles, a condition which is was shought would be minute, if not estished in y retied, as selemn y declared is the re-cluster to der which

the Union." The con-ertaire members of the Convention, reflecting as I tien b heved, and now believe the sincere wish of a large unjority of the people of every State represented carnes ly desired to a tisfy the South that the atl ution would not be interfered with, and, on the con tery, that their righ a in relation to it would be faithfully obse. ved in the present and secure'y protected in the future. With this object they wished to give the South, without impairing any rights vested in the Nor h, such guarances, which, athorgo implied, a they thought, in guaran ces, whice, attough implied, as they thought, in the C nativation as it is, would, if given in terms, quiet the Southern mind and deprice the treason ble egitators North and South of the only a bj-stann which they could hope to m ke themselves what they were evidently about to he, the architects of their countr, 's ruin.

To recomplish this, hower r, as the Convention possess ed b t a morel power, it was obvious that wasning of epinion as vital Recommendatine by a bre mejulty, it was almost hopeless to belove, clud produce a suppy resut. In the committee to whom the whole of jet we reter ed, and at whose head was placet Mr. Guinrie, a Ken ucky, and of which Mr. Feld was a member, off ort to this sud were made again and egain, but in vent. And what was finally egreed usen and reported met with sauction of but a bare maj ray of h c mm thee, Mr. Feld not b ing one of that me juri y. The discussi me, in every mee ing of the committee, were enturest, and a part of the Bouthern members (1 was of the number) imported their Northe n brethien to agree to semething that there was any reason to bell we would be a diffectory to the South I saw then that unanimity could a on render the propositions of the committee off-ot ve. I she saw, and, as the result has proved, that no satisfactory a justiment at sined, an attempt at least would be made to sever the Unon. Not that I telieve for a momen that such an attempt could at least would be made to sever the Union. find any warrant in the Constitute o, or be justly maintain ed on r. volutionary grounds, and still less that, if timely and vigorously met, it could be succes tal. But I believ. the long-, I sting to a tors would succeed in mid-a ting the bonest moses, and in driving them on to de truc-tion, through the madness and wick duess of tr a ouable rebellion, by fil 1 g toem with a conviction that the institution of alvery would be assailed, and all he fatal con-squences which they approbended from it ensue. All the Scuthern and many of the Northern members of the Con-tents a thought that satisfactory guarantees should be offered the S u.h. and that, to make the recommendation of the Conventin officere, the proposition should receive unspin ous support. That done, we were o neinced that the routh would set at betrenemies in the North constituted but a small portion of its people, possessing no power to be dreaded, and that public opinion there was ound and desired to secure the rou b in all its rights, and in prejecting them against the wrongs and perils with which they were threatened. In this view many of the Northern delegates concurred. Of those from New York all con-

curred but a bare majority, Mr. Field being, I regret to say, one of that majority. He, and they who acted with him, advocated Mr. Baldwin's proposal for a National Con-vention. In vain were they told by every Southern member that such a proposition would be insufficient for the whatever, but, on the contrary, would, under the circums ances, be esteomed mere trifling. In the then temper of the States they were also told, what seem d to us to be obvious, that it was more than doubtful whether such Coneation could be constitutionally procured, and certain, if was had, that no guarastees that the South would consider sufficient would be recommended. Had the New York del gates adopted a different course—had they speken with ne voice in support of the Guth is report, (so justly potential as that voice ever is.) I believed then, and believe now, that the desired unanimity is support of the report could have been obtained, and that Congress would have acted upon it at its then session, or if not, that the South would have fet such an assurance of security in the re commendation of the Convention that no immediate attempt

But rebellion would have been made. But, it in a want of fore ight as I think-from a blindners to the danger that was before them—that viece was not spoken. The mejority of her delegates, so far from ricaking it, result don an opposite course, and were so tive and most i fluential in defeating the so much desired, the so vital unanimy in support of any guarantees that the Sou hein members and many of the Northern moments thought would alse met the crisis. Their mistake (and a creadful one it wa-) was becau e, perhaps wi hout being wate of it, they were under party in her than national it. fluctors. They were too, it seemed to me, under the fur-ther and as ead error of believing that the South was not in earnest; and that from fear, or other m dive, they we use not venture in ribellion. They main sixed, therefore. throughout, their of position to the proposed Guthrie goarant es, and were equally hostile to any that their South ein brethren ever and over a ain iffered; and in terms of einert invoca ion implored them, ad pting colicitation th we uld have been esteemed, and tru'y, undignified, but to the great issue that they tell to be impending—CIVII. WAR deberate of in on" of that be y that "un est the anhap y a wor be wien brothers -- a war that wou'd sunder ties the heliest that had ever bound people toget er-a war to be a tended with deacful misery -the destruction of our prespectly for untold ages—the loss of our prouds takin amongs; the nations of the world, and prob bly the total extinguishment for years, if not forever, of our very free-

dom i se f. Bu entreaty proved as fruitless as argument. The redu tons containing the guaran are passed the Conv. ntion but only by a mere undon't y, and as foreseen, they resulted in nothing. They were not acted upon by Congress. The imparted not even temporary a surance of safety to the anxious South; and now the so much dreaded civil war is upon us. Oh! tost its exis ence, its frigh ful progress, its millions of wort d weath, its effect upon narronal re-pu ation, aid, above all, the ag ny which it has brought in o thousands and thousands of boose happy housables, on urred with him! A v honorable, satisfactory guaranes, if then . ff red-guaran ees that would in n . particular have sure ndered or impaired the rights of the North-would. I to be too have been received with j you arelama i n; and we should still be, as we were once, a unit of, and the retore a happy, prosperous, and powerful people, a le to bear, with a night but contemptions pity, the insolute ce and vulgar scurplity of the English Roebucks of the day, whose former prof seed and hypocratical harred of slavery they are now yielding to the base love of avericious cal.—two s'rig not only for all moral restraint, but us not, however, for a moment permit our eves to believe that such men are types of the English character. or speak English opinion. Fortun tely for her honor, he sterest, and her a fity, and her influence upon the civilizaion and freedom of Europe, they are as unlike the gentlemen and state men of that great country as our peculators and blockade runners are unlike our honest and loyal citi z na. They are, in truth, themselves but the unstarts of he kis gdom, if, as is justy remarked by one of their most

esteemed and gift d historic writers, "arrogance and pre-sumption be the usual faults" of the class. From what I have said, you will see that Mr. Field is total y mistak n in sup, osing that the Peace Conference satisfied me, or, as I have every rea on to know, satisfied et he of the other mombers named by him. The guarantees ecommended in Mr Guthrie's report were satisfactory, but the conjuct of the Convention, resulting in a great m a-ure or m Mr. Field's course, remered the Conven-tion itself any thing but sat's actory. We saw in it, as the result proved, certain defeat in Congress of the recommended guarantees, and saw with quil clearness, that the result of its delicerations would not, for a moment, suspend even the period excit-ment of the Southern mind, r av rt the calamity it involved. But the errors of the past cannot be corrected. We can only learn from them wildom for the tuture. What does that teach us? Is it that no Union feel ng is now to be found in the South rn Is it that it is so totally extinct that to revive i is impossible? I do not think so. The Guthries and Wickliffer, the Joneses, the Rodneys and the Bates, the Rives and the Summers, the Ruffins and the Moreheads. ed the thousands and thousands who united with them will have in their hearts, as pure as ever, love of the Union which their fathers constructed. Satisfy them ton', the war ended, that Union will be as it was intended to be, and was before treason and fanaticism involved us a the existing trightful et uggle, and mu h, very much. all be come to bring the struggle to an end, and to restore our former nationality. We shall then, too, know each other the better, and value each other the more. Courage has been f und a common possersi n-mistakes as to The beresy exploded, the other kindred and as gross and character corrected-love of freed in is seen to be equally sincere, and we shall be more firmly convinced than we personal and State-rights which our fathers provided, can alone make us what they intended and believed they had accompashed through their blood and wid m- he feest a d the happest, and one of the most influential nations of With great regard, your obedient servant, REVERDY JOHNSON.

> THE PETERHOFF-A CURIOUS REVELATION. The following letter, copied from the London Daily News, throws some light on the question whether the steamer Peterhoff was bound on a legitimate voyage or not. The I ally News thus introduces the letter:

> "The name of the Peterh ff m y or may not be destined to become hist rical, but unquestionably a vast amount of public interest is just now gathered about it Unfortunatey, the most expeditious communications beween this country and the port where she now lies cave a long interval, during which the public must wait for informat on concerning her. In the meanwhile, whatver throws light on the character of the trade with which hose connected with her were engaged will be read with nterest. In this belief we pub ish the su joined document, signed by the highly respectable and enterprising firm of Meisrs. Bennett & Wake, the shippers of the Pe-

" Mr. Bennett, we may observe, was on board of the Potentiff woon she was taker. Mr. Wake was one of the eputation which waited on Lord Ru sell to press for spirited as ection for the rights of British commerce. Mr. It dgate, nentioned in the circular, was a passenger by the Peterhoff and wrote the protest against her seizure. Messra, Barcheg, Poll-in & Co., it will be remembered. were the brokers for negotiating the Confederate loan, and Mr Harding was sue of the deputation which waited on Earl Rus eli. It will be seen that he is the geutleman amed as the fac or for the distribution of the proceeds of he cotton, &c. Mr Bisbee, was noids the contract to 'in o the Confederate States,' and who is not bound to take them through Matamoros, is a citizen of With these indications we subjoin the document:

"No. 77 CORNHILL, E. C. "DEAR SIR: We may state for the guidance of any friends who may be des rous of shipping to America, that arrai gements have been in de for to despute of a vessel by us to the Kio Grande about the first week of December; that cost of freight and insurance on goods can be paid at the port of delivery. The services of the highly espectable firm of Mes-re. Brown, Fleming & Co., at Mat moras, have been secured, also those of Mr. Redg ite, Lieya's agent, an expert in Catton, and who has been resident nearly farty years in Texas and Mexico. That genil ma.'s services will be of great value to shippers in respect to his local knowledge and i fluence, and also as regards agency of the inland transit and landing and ship my of goods and cotton. Mr. Harding, of the firm of M sars. Harding, Pul'eiu & Co., of the city, has been named and consented to act factor for the receiving of the proceeds in cotton and the equal distribution of the same to shippers, soonraing to value of respective shipments, will effect the necessary insurance. Further, a Mr. Babee, of the Confederate States of America, holds a con ract from that Government, whereby he is to receive one hundred per cent, on invoice cost, payable in cotton at special value, clear of all charges of freight, &c., for any goods he may deliver into the Confederate States. Said contract has been authenticated by Mr. Mason and others. He is willing to sha e same, to the extent of firty per cent., with any houses that may feel mouned to amp. Moreover, sa d parties are at liberty to send out their, wn supercargo s, and if the goods can meet with a better market, emppers by our vessel may avail themeeves of said contractor not, but in the latter case (if they do not send out under Bab c's contract) there will be no cer-tauty of getting cotton back, as the wagon traffic cannot be properly carried out wi hout the nin of Government support in the shape of t-ameters to attend to cattle, a which the Conf derate Government will supply from the army to facili ate the inta d transport of goods and the oringing back of ce ton for the contract. In the event of peace of the consistion of hos littles the Confiderate Gover ment, by the contract, blad the f to receive goods that are shipped but not delivered, and for any order ped, but in course of same, ten per cent. prof: upon voice cost and charges.

"Any further information you may require we shall be happy to give you our best efforts to obtain from the respective parties interested.
"We remain, dear sir, yours tru'y

BENNETT & WAKE."

#### THE CONFISCATION ACT.

By an order of the President of the United States, under date of November 13, 1862, the Attorney General was charged with the superintendence and direction of all proceedings to be had under the set of Congress of 17th July, 1862, entitled "An act to suppress in-arrection, to punish treason and rebellion, to seize and confiscate the property of rebels, and for other purposes," in so far as may concera the seizure, prosecution, and condemnation of the estate, property, and effects of insurgents, as mentioned and provided for in the fifth, sixth, and seventh sections of

the said net of Congress. The Attorney General was further authorized and required to give to the Attorneys and Mar-hals of the United States such instructions and directions as he may find needful and convenient touching all such serzures, prose-

cutions, and condemnations. By a subsequent order of the President the Attorney General was equally charged with the superintendence and direction of all proceedings to be had under the act of Congress of August 6 h, 1861, entitled " An act to confis

cate property used for insurrectionary purposes." Called to superintend the administration of these statu'es, Mr. Attorney General Bares has issued the following instructions and regulations, from which it will be perceived that the military authorities have, neither dir ctly nor indirectly, any power to seize the property of r. bels, as referred to in the orders of the President, only so far as is required by the instruct one of the Attorney General, and then only in aid of and in subordination to the civil

authority. The following are the "General Instructions" of the Attorney General :

ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE, JAN. 8, 1863. General Instruct one to District Attorneys and Marshals r. Lative to Proceedings under the Acts of Congress fo

Confiscation. The President of the United States has charged the At orney General with the superintendence and direction of all proceedings to be had under the act of Congress of the 17th of July, 1862, and the act of August 6 1861, com monly called the confi-ca ion laws, and authorized and r quired him to give to the Attorn ye and Marshale such in venient touching all such serzures, proceedings, and con-demnations. In the execution of that duty, I find it neces arry to give but a few pr liminary instructions relative to the seizure of property with a view to condemnation under

the law. The law requires the proceeding to begin with s-izure. When once sezed and properly reported to the District Attorney, it will be proceeded against in court. Then each case becomes an action pending, and the laws themselves are the sufficent instruction to both the Attorney and the Marchat in all ord nary cases. If unforeseen diffi culties arise in the progress of a cause, so as to embarrass the District Attorney or Marshal as to his mode of procording, he should report to this office, stating the precise facts, and asking instruction upon the point or his difficulty. With regard to the seizure of property, the following

instructions are given:

1. All seizures will be made by the Marshal of the proper district under written authority, to be given him the District Attorney, sp-cifying with reasonable certhinty the property to be sezed, and the owner whose right is sought to be confi-ested. 2. When the Marshal h a re zed any proper y under

such authority, he will, with ut any unnecessary delay, make a true return thereof, in writing, to the District 3. The District Attorney shall keep in his office, fairly written in a book, a duplicate or exact copy of every such order of seizure made by him and directed to the Marshal and the Marshal thall keep to his office, fartly written in a book, a duplicate or exact copy of every return of secure which he shall make to the District Attorney. And this

as well for their own safety as for the information of the Government and the Court. Government and the Court.

4. The issuing of the order of seizure is trusted to the discretion of the District Attorney; and while to out he to be vigilant to execute the law he ought to be careful to avoid hasty and improvi ent seizures. In every instance he ought to be satisfied that there is probale cause for the seizure, and that he has reasonable ground to believe that he can prove in court the facts nec ssary to warrant the condemnation. For offerwise, besides the i justice which may be done to individuals, the Government will be put to great expense, and will be discredited by the frequent failure of its prosecutions. The District Attorney must, n-cessarily, do this part of his duty upon his own Judgmen and responsibility. He is on the spot, and has the mean of knowledge, while this office cannot have the requisite information of the facts, nor govern the details of prose-

in all the districts of the nation. 5. As to the manner of making the selgure, I can do little more now then suggest methods of convenence Where the State law directs the method of stizure t should be conformed to as nearly as may be, consistently with the objects of the acts of C ngress. If the thing t be seized be personal property, it ought to be actually seized and saf ly kept. If real estate, the Marshal ough to seize all the right, til, interest, and estate of the ac cused party, giving notice, in writing, of the regure to the tenants in possession, if any. If stocks or other inta-gible property, the Marshal ought (if there be no specific method prescribed by the State law) to describe the pro perty as painly se he can in his return, and I ave the court to determine the sufficiency of the seizure.

cution, in the multitude of cases that will probably areas

6. I am credibly informed that a various parts of the country prop rty has been re'z d by minitary officers, with view to confiscation, under the acts of Congress. In all such cases, when the military officer in possession is willing to surrender the property to the civil authority, to be proceeded against according to law, the Marshal snall re-ceive the sam , and make return thereo; to the District Attorney, as required in No. 2

7. After the serzure of the property the District After

ney will, with all convenient speed, proceed in the proper court for the condemnation of the property seized. As this is a new class of business in our courts, Congress has thought proper to put your fees and compensation upon a new basis. The act of July 17, 1862, a.c. 8 p 191, provide toat "the said courts shall have power to allow such free and charges of their officers as shall be EDW. BATES, Attorney General.

# THE CAPTURE OF ALEXANDRIA, (La.)

From the New Orleans Era of May 10th. Rear Admiral Farragut, Fleet Capt. Jonkins, Dr loikes, Surg on of the Fleet, E. C. Gabsdan, Admiral Farragut's Secretary, Fleet Clerk Palmer, and Lieut. Eaten, of the Army S goal Corps, arrived here this after noon from Brashear City.

It seems that there have been stirring scenes enacted in the departments of the Mississippi and the Gulf during the past week

Admiral Farragut and his officers left the flag-hip Hart ford in Red river on Friday morning, and came through Atchafalaya river and Grand Lake to Brashear City. He brings intelligence that Alexandria was captured on the 6th by A miral Porter, with his own and a portion of Admiral Farragut's fleet.

Previously to taking Alexandria, to wit, on the 4th ins'ant, the gunboats Albatroes, Estrella, and Arizons went that remained of Fort De Russy. The batteries of the fort were first engaged, and soon the steamers Grand Duke and Mary T. took a part in the fight. The Mary T. had a shot put late her boiler, and was disabled. The

Grand Duke made her escape, and the fort surrendered. After the capture of Grand Gulf by Admiral Porter, Geo. Grant crossed the river with an immense force, and landed at Grand Pierre, when he immediately marched upon and took Port Gibeen, a place about eight miles from the river, and a noted nest for a cossionists. At last accounts he was marching on Jackson, with a force entirely

competent to take the capital of Mississip; i. These important successes will place an immense region of productive country under the authority of the Government; and if half we bear from those quarters may be beleved, it will not take a large force to keep the people in

submission to lawful authority. We have learned, since writing the above, that Alexandria was taken by Admirs! Porter early on the morning of the 6:b; and at 6 o'clock in the evening Gos. Dwight's cavalry dashed into the place, thus forming a junction between the land force of the department of the Gulf and the Western flotilla.

#### THE MASSACHUSETTS NEGRO R. GIMENT. BOSTON, MAY 18 .- The 54th Massachusetts, or colored

egiment, was to-d y present d with four reg mental colors. The presentation speech was m de by Gov. Andrew, who said he was identified with the reguent, and would stand or fail with its history as a man and a magistrate.

# "A WARNING"

A despatch from Indianapolis to the Cincinnati Gazette says: "Gen. Harcall his war and the publishers of copperhead newspapers in Indiana that they must apologies for their recent of utent articles, and be careful for the future, unless they wish to be assested and to have their sheets

### WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENCE.

From Washington Letters to the New York Journals. A movement is on funt, which is strongly supported by iofluential men both in an I out of the Cabinet, for the appointment of Gen. But er to the command of the Department of the West, from which Gen. Curtis has just been removed, and of which Brig. Gen. Schofield, whose nomination as major general the Senate omitted to confirm on the ground of his pro-slavery views and general incapacity, is temporarily in charge.

THE ENROLLMENT FOR THE DRAFT.

The provest marshals appointed under the national enrollment act have received their instructions, and been directed to proceed with the draft forthwith. It is supposed, however, that it will take from fifty to sixty days to complete it, and it is doubtful whether any draft can be made before the middle of July. Volunteers may, however, be called for before that time.

THE \$300 DRAFT EXEMPTION CASE.

The apparently conflict ng statements respecting the interpretation of the \$300 clause in the National Enrollment act are easily reconciled upon the basis of our paragraph Monday's Tribune on the subject. The Secretary of War has, within three or four days, declared several times that he had concluded to construe the clause to be permissive and not mandatory open him, and should ignore it, But the arguments which convinced the Secretary and Senator Wilson of the correctness of this view failed to convince Solicitor Whiting, whose opinion on a question of law is justly valued. Nor is there any evidence that the President, who has heretofore considered the clause binding upon the Secretary, concurs in the latter's view that its enforcement is optional with him. It will thus be seen that the Government has not yet authoritatively decided the question, and it is not improbable, in view of its exceeding importance, that it may yet be referred to the Attorney General. Possibly, either in lieu of such reference or in addition to it, the several members of the Cabinet may be called upon to lay their opinions in writing before the President. It is understood that the views of the Atterney General are diametrically opposed to those entert ined by the Secretary of War, and that he holds that the law obliges the Scoretary to fix a sum by the payment of which, to properly-appointed persons, the drafted man may discharge himself. The eventual determination of the G vernment, under these circumstances, is of course a matter of uncertainty.

OUR REGULAR ARMY.

The fate of the regular army has once more attracted the attention of the War Department. Before the war broke out our regular army consisted of some seventeer thousand men, composed of ten regiments of infantry and the remainder of cavalry and artitlery. In June, 1861 eleven new regiments, each to have three battalions of eight bundred men, were added to this force. Subsequently all mounted regiments, old and new, were put on be same footing as regards numbers, each having one thousand two hundred men. If all the regiments full we should have some forty thousand regulars, but it has been discovered that on the 1st of May they did not number five hundred men each, while they are rapidly dwindling out of existence, recruiting having almost died away. The order permitting volunteers to go under the regular standard slopped some huge gaps for a time, but the order was countermanded, and death is threatening this branch of the service. West Point is alarmed, and has taken to pamphlets, one of which has just been issued here, to show that regulars are better soldiers than volunteers, because they have lost a greater number of men in battle. What course will be taken in the premises is not yet decided upon. Officers have recently been detached from unfilled regiments and assigned to staff and recruiting duty. Every regular recruit obtained costs, when a I things are taken into account, nearly two hundred dollars; and yet there are not men enough enlisted to supply the peace requirements, not to speak of the exigences of war. Recruiting will probably, therefore, be abolished, and some radical measure adopted to fill the decimated ranks. army die out, as its usefulness, were its men ever so brave. is of little acc unt when we number our troops by the balf million. It is said, however, that Gen Halleck will endeavor to have all the regular regiments filled to their full quota. and kept at it by some means or other.

## THE CASE OF GEN. BUELL.

Even before the record of the Commission had been made Gen. Buell put his defence, which is regarded as skillful, into the printer's hands, with intent to pu once in a pamphlet The Commissioners, getting wind of this fact, prohibited the publication before all the copy had been put in type. The document will, however, probably be all wed to appear so soon as the President shall have acted up a the findings, which embrace not only a summing up of the facts of the campaign, as derived from the estimony, but also an opinion upon the conduct of Gen Buell and other efficers implicated, and upon the punish-Buell and other officers ment, if any, which each deserves, the Commission having been armed with similar powers with those exercised by the court which investigated the surrenter of Harner's ten by Gen L-wis Wallace, and is now in the hands of the leniently with all concerned, to be altogether satisfactory to the military powers that be. It is thought probable, however, that it will be approved, but doubtful whether it will at present be given to the world. Gen. Ord is still at Carlisle Barracks, whither he was exiled, as a punishment for coming to Washington without leave while a membe of the Buell Commission. Major Don Platt, Judge Advo cate of the Buell Commission, has gone t , Baltimore, where he will immediately-enter upon his duties as chief of Gen. Scheuck's staff.

THE TRANS MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT.

It is feared that Gen. Schofield, the choice of Governor Gamble, Senator Henderson, and others belonging to the moderate party in Missouri, will be continued in command of the Trans-Mississippi Department, instead of Gen. Butler, who has been strongly pressed for the successorship to Gen. Curtis. Great indignation is felt here that a man whose principal recommendation is that he is a graduate of West Point, and is unlikely to offend pro-slavery Unionists, should be put in so important a position, while the sword of Gen. Butler is permitted to rust in Lowell, on the plea that no place can be found for him. The order making the change in the department is as follows:

War Department, Adjutant General's Office, Washington, May 13, 1-63.
GENERAL ORDERS, No. 121. - First. Maj .: Gen. J. M. Schofield is, by direction of the President, assigned to command the Department of Missiuri. Second. Major Gen. S. R. Curtis, on being relieved from

his command, will report by letter to the Adjutant Gene rai of the Army.

By order of the President. E. D. TOWNSEND, Asst. Adl. Gen.

THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC. There is quiet on the Rappahannock, and there is to be

qui-t there for two or three weeks yet, unless the rebels

make a demonstration up n Washington or Maryland. Gen. Hooker has full command of his army still, and there is not a thought in the President's mind of removing him. up Red river on a reconnoiseance, and made a prize of all His plans for the future are kept secret, and with propriety, but certain outside facts give sufficient evidence that Gen. Hooker has no idea of doing any thing for some weeks yet. This is the very weather a fighting general would most desire for military operations. A month later the temperature is too high for Northern soldiers in Virginia. The delegation of gentlemen from the city of New York, who came here to get Gen. Franklin put in command of the Army of the Potomac, have not succeeded. They were received with courtesy every where but their request will not be g anted. The President is obstinate in some things, and he will not remove Hooker till he has been tried once more, and even then there is no probability whatever that a McClellan General will be honored with the place now filed by Hucker. If any General of that school gets the filed by Hooker. If any General of that scho appointment it will be McClellan himself, and his chances of being called to the head of his old army are very slight

THE LATE PABICATED NEWS. An investigation has been had into the origin of the

taking-of-Richmond stories, which so convulsed the entire North but a week since, and it turns out that the whole thing was a pure invention for which the Government and the te egraph were not in any wise responsible. The report originated in the brain of a Philadelphia broker, who went from Washington and palmed off his "information" upon the two susceptible Philadelphia Inquirer, who in turn bulletined it as coming from a Washington correcopied it, and added to it as coming from "private sources," the confirmatory street reports which were so speedly gotten up on the publication. An attempt was made to telegraph the printed copy to New York, but the War Department prohibited it, and it was sent through on a late train to New York by a special messenger. Thence it was tell-graphed by the Independent Telegraph Company to Boston, &c., an order prohibiting its transmission over the other lines having been issued. From Philadephia it was sent West over a railroad line. The simple result of the whole matter shows that it was a bold movement for speculative purposes, which a too strict telegraphic sensorship gave a wide borth for circulation.

LATEST FOREIGN NEWS.

The steamship "City of New York," which arrived at New York on Sunday night, brings news from England to the 7th melant, being four days later than previous accounts. We make some extracts relating to American affairs and to the revolt in Poland. Nothing of particular interest to this country is reported in the proceedings of Parliament.

CONFEDERATE AGENTS IN ENGLAND. A correspondence has taken place between Earl Rus-SELL and Mr. ADAMS as to the conduct of certain parties in England who, Mr. Adams says, "are bent on making this kingdom subservient to their purpose of conducting hostilities against a nation with which she is at peace."

Mr. ADAMS forwarded, in proof of this statement, some correspondence which had been intercepted.

Earl RUSSELL replied: This correspondence does not appear to her Majesty's Government to contain any sufficient evidence of "a system of action in direct hostility to the United States". the United States" on the part of any of her Majesty's sub-jects. It goes merely to show that agents of the so-styled Confederate States, resident in this country, have received instructions from their own Government to endeavor raise money on s-cutities of that Government in England, and to enter into contracts for the purchase of munitions of war and for the building of iron clad vessels. But there is no proof in these papers that the agents referred to have as yet brought themselves within the reach of any criminal law of the United Kingdom.

Mr ADAMS, on March 14, expresses his pr gret at having to transmit to Mr. Seward Earl Russell's reply, maintaining that the acts referred to in the correspondence, the sppointment of agents in this country to fit out ships and raise money for the purpose, with the sp-pointment of officers to superintend the construction, show ed a "deliberate attempt to establish within the limits of the kingdom a system of action in direct hostility to the Government of the United States."

Some further correspondence ersued, and on the 20.h Earl RUSSELL wrote : "With regard to the com which you have made from time to time of British sailors who have entered the Confederate service, I have to remark that no steps have hitherto been taken by the Uni ed States authorities to prevent British subjects from entering the military or naval service of the United States. Mr. Seward bas, on the contrary, justified the means used. provided they were not bribery or intimidation—to induce British sailors to enter the Federal service. You will resdily perceive the justice of the request I am about to make, namely: that before you repeat your complaints that Bri-tish sailors have entered the service of the so-called Confederate States you will furnish me with proofs that all British subjects serving in the Federal army or navy have been discharged, and that orders have been given not to enlist or engage such persons to serve in arms contrary to the tenor of her Majesty's proclamation."

SPEECH OF MR. ADAMS.

On the 2J instant a deputation of Trades Unionists waited upon Mr. ADAMS, the American Minister, to present the address recently adopted at a public meeting of that body, sympathizing with the North, and applaiding President Lincoln for his emancipation policy.

Mr. BRIGHT introduced the deputation and made a few pertinent remarks. Speeches were also made by several nembers of the deputation. Mr. ADAMS, having expressed the pleasure he felt at see

ng so numerous a population of working men before him. said :

Gentlemen: I accept with pleasure the dutysyou have mposed upon me in receiving your address to Mr. Lincoln. Representing, as I do, my country in England, you must Representing, as I do, my country in England, you must be aware that I stand outside all local questions; therefore, it is not my province to express dissatisfaction or satisfaction with those persons in England who express their opinions upon America. If there are any in this country who put a harsh construction on the conduct of the American Government it is not my place to find fault or my right to criticism. right to criticuse. It is my duty, however, to accept from the representatives of any body of Englishmen the favorable sentiments toward the Government I represent, and to re-ciprocate the frank, manly, and independent spirit in which they have been tendered. I understand, gentlemen, you attend here as representing

large bodies of working men, who advocate and uphold the rights of labor, and it is therefore but natural you at ould ok with dislike upon any parties, in whatever countries they may exist, was infringe on those rights. You perhey may exist, who initing out the serve that, in the struggle now going on, an attempt is made to establish a government on the destruction of the rights of labor; a government on the destruction of the rights of labor. It is a question above all local rights; it is a general principle, and therefore, though taking place in a foreign country, you have a right to express your opinion thereon. I accept the duty you npose on me with great pleasure, the mo aken advantage of the occasion to speak on the question

I agree with your views. With two nations of the same race, of the same high spirit, both feeling proud of their superiority on the ocean, under present circumstances it would be indeed surprising if something should not spring up on that ocean which might occasion collision. I concur with you gentlemen, as to the great forbearance which ought to be exhibited by both countries in construing the actions of each other. I trust that, in spite of all that has becurred, there is in the Government of each country a sufficient sense of responsibility which will induce then to maintain friendly relations with each other. There must naturally be a feeling of pride, of fear lest one nation should appear to refrain from properly resenting what it might deem to be an offence, and in this lies the great danger. I feel confident, however, that if the two peoples, if the two Governments would speak together in the same souse, in the same frank and unreserved terms as you have speken to the this evening, all fear of any collision would be at an end. I can assure you that, no withstanding the speeches of some of my countrymen, notwithstanding the writings in some American journals, there is no nation noder the sun for which America entertains a greater regard than England, and if the real sentiments of the peo-ple of each country can be clearly established to each other I shall have no fear of their coming into colis on. [Cheers] I believe, geutlemen, you have taken the right course to produce this desirable understanding, and I course to produce this desirable understanding, and I shall undertake with great pleasure the duty of at once transmitting your address to President Lincoln. [Cheers]

The London Times looks upon Mr. Adams's speech as no-t reasonable and timely :

"A good many words may pass, says the Times, "with-out leading to blows, and as we are confident that neither Englishmen nor Americans have the least wish to go to war with each other, we look forward without mistrust to that mutual forbearance on the part of their Government which Mr Adams so wisely invokes. We must submit to certain interruptions in our trade in deference to the rights of a beligerent. The Americans must tolerate some shortof a beligerent. The Americans must tolerate some short-comings on our part in consideration of the difficul ies of a neural. We can assure them, if they need the assurance, that not a single violation of our neutrality would ever oc-cur wi hout the regret of the Government and the deprecation of the public, but such offences cannot be essily

In another editorial the Times shows reasons why Eng-I and must put the most favorable construction possible on the proceedings of the Federal cruisers.

THE POREIGN ENLISTMENT ACT. In the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, on the 4th instant, a latter was read from the Foreign Office, dated the 15th April, acknowledging the receipt of the memorial from the Live pool Chamber of Commerce, on the subject of the foreign enlistment act, and stating that her Majesty's Government cannot, on consideration, see how any improvement can be made in that act. Mr. King moved that the Chamber express its hope that in case further experies ce beyond the escape of the Alabama shall show that the foreign enlis' ment act is not efficient for the accomplishment of its object, in which British interests are so deeply involved, immediate steps would be taken to remedy the deficiency before precedents should grow up which might seriously embarrass England whenever she might be engaged in war. The motion was unanis THE PETERHOPP.

In the Hou e of Lords on the 30th of April Earl Rus-SELL rose and said that as the question of the seizure of the Peterboff and the detention of her Majesty's ma is had been recently the subject of discussion in their lordships House, it might be convenient to their lordships that he should state the substance of the information he had that day received from Lord Lyons. Lord Lyons stated that, n answer to his application, Mr. Seward had informed him that with regard to the vessel and her cargo the Gov. ernment of the United States had determined not to release them, but to send them before a prize court; but with regard to the mails he wished him to inform her Majesty's Postmester General that, in conformity with his letter of the 31st of Oct ber, the mail would be forwarded spondent of the paper. The Philadelphia evening journals to its destination. He also stated that in every similar cose the same course would be adopted until some arrangement had been arrived at between her Mejesty's Government and the Government of the United States on the question. Mr. Seward said he did not think that the law of nations laid down any decisive or clear rule with regard to the somewhat novel practice of sending mail bags in private ships, and therefore he wished to make a commu-nication to her Mejesty's Government on the subject at her Majesty's Government on the subject at

some future day.

Lord CHELMSFORD asked whether in every case it was

Foreign Office, April 24, 1863.

My Lord: I have received and in'd before the Que your Excellency's despatch of the 12th instant, enclosit a copy of a manifesto on P dish effairs issued by the Euperor of Russia on the 31st March, (12th April).

Her Majesty's Government have carefully and anxiously considered the contents of this document, in the hope to find in it the germ of a restoration of peace and a hope of good government to Poland. I have to make to you the following remarks as the result of their deliberations:

Au amnesty may lay the foundation of peace in two cases.

1. If the insurgents have been thoroughly defeated, and

are only waiting for a promised pardon to enable them to return to their homes.

2. If the amnesty is accompanied with such ample promises of the redress of the grievances which gave a ccasion to the insurrection as to induce the insurgents to think that their object is attained.

It is clear that the first of these cases is not that of the present insurrection. It is not put down; it is, on the contrary, rather more extensive than it was a few weeks ago. Let us, then, examine the amnesty with reference to the second of the supposed cases. The Emperor, referring to the justitutions which he has conferred (actroyees) on the kingdom of Poland, says:

En maintenant encore aujourd'hui ces institutions dans leur integrite, nous reservons, lorsqu'elles auront ete eprouvees dans la pratique, de proceder a leur developpement ulterieur selon les besoins du temps et ceux du pays.

This promise can hardly be satisfactory to the Poles. For it must be observed, with regard to the institutions already given, that it was during their exist-ace that two thousand young men were seized arbitrarily in the night thousand young men were seized arbitrarily in the night and condem ed to serve as soldiers in the Russian army, in defiance of justice, and even in violation of the law of 1859, so recently exacted. So that it is evident no security would be obtained by submitting again to the same laws. With these institutions in full force and vigor unoccent men might be imprisoned as criminals, or condemned to serve at seldiers, or banished to distant countries without a trial, without a trial, without publicity, without any guarantee whatever. As to the promise held out for the future it must be observed to the promise held out for the future it must be observed that it is made to depend on the practical working of these institutions, and on the wants of the time and of the country. The first of these conditions alone destroys all reasonable hope of the fulfilment of this promise. For the practical working of the institutions hitherto given depends on the co-operation of native Poles of property and character as members of the Council of State, and of provincial and municipal assemblies. But the recent conduct of the Russian Government in Poland has deprived them of the confidence of all Poles of this description, and forced all such Poles to withdraw from the bodies in which their functions were to be exercised. There are wanting, therefunctions were to be exercised There are wanting, there fore, in this imperial manifesto the first elements of success—

tore, in this insperial manifesto the first viewers students and the teeling of trust and confidence on the other.

In a despatch of Lord Durham, then Ambas ador at St. Petersburgh, dated in August, 1832, Lord Dusham says:

"There has long been a jealousy—nay, hared—existing between the Bussians and the Poles." Her Mojesty's Consumment had bound that the present Engagement has been a jealousy—nay are the poles. between the Bussians and the Poles." Her M.jesty's Government had hoped that the present Emperor, by raising the social position of his Russian and securing the political freedom of his Polish subjects, might have united both by the link of leval attachment to the throne. This hope has been unfortunately disappointed, and it is with great-pain that her M.jesty's Government observe that the feelings of hatred between Russians and Poles have not in the lapse of thirty years been softened or modified. The present amnesty does not appear likely to diminish the intensity of the insurrection, or give any solid security to the most mederate of Polish patriots.

I am, &c. TRANSLATION .- "In maintaining at this day these inetitut one in their integrity we reserve to ourselv.s, whenever they shall have been practically tried, to proceed to their further development, in accordance with the requirements of the age and of the country." THE POLISH QUESTION.

The replies of Russis to the Governments of Englands France, and Austria were delivered to those Governments respectively on the 2d instant : The Paris Pays says, in reference to the note to France:

Russia declares her good intentions toward Pol ind and expresses a desire to satisfy the Powers within the limits escifbed by her own safety and dignity. The reply on the whole is of a pacific character." The Patrie says: "The reply of Russia expresses, in substance, ideas and intentions on the part of the Emperor Alexander which correspond in every respect with those of the Emperor Napoleon. The means of applying them

still remain to be discussed." A Vienna telegram saye: "Prince Gortschakoff, in his reply to the Austrian note, says Count Rechberg was right,

seevents have shown, in anticipating that the Emperor Alexander would be disposed to show elemency to the Poles on the dispersion of the insurrectionary bands. Count Rechberg will, however, perceive that a return to order does not depend upon interior measures alone.

"The intrigues of the foreign revolutionary party are the main source of the agitation, and the influence of the great Powers would therefore be best exercised if directed against those intrigues. Prince Gurtanhoff dentation ed against those intrigues. Prince Gortschakoff doubts not that Austria will neglect nothing in order to put a stop to the machinations of the revolutionary party."

RUSSIA'S REPLY TO ENGLAND.

On the 14th of April Prince Gortechskoff replied to the protest of England in behalf of P. land. Earl Russell's despatch, dated April 10, instructed Lord Napier to pro-1815 by Russia, and expressed the opinion that the insurrection of the Poles was justified by the course of action which Russis had pursued. Prince Gortschakoff replies in turn to these divisions of the protest; first claiming, in explicit terms, that the treaty stipulations of 1815 in behalf of the Poles, were annulled by their revolt in 1830; and insisting, in the second place, that the continual conspiracies in Poland have brought affairs to their present condition, and that Russia cannot safely make further concessions. The conclusion of Prince Gortschakoff's des-

palch is as follows : "Our august master notices with satisfaction the senti-

"Our august master notices with satisfaction the senti-ments of confidence which the Government of her Britannic Majesty testify towards him in relying upon him to bring back the Kingdom of Poland to conditions which would render possible the realization of his benevolent views.

"But the more the Emperor is disposed to take into account the just prepossessions of the neighboring States, and the interests which the Powers who signed the treaty of 1815 show in a state of things which is the cause of deep solicitude to his Majesty himself, the more our source. deep solicitude to his Majesty bimself, the more our august master considers it a duty to request the revious attention, upon the true causes of this situation, and upon the means of remedying it, of the Courts who have addressed them-

of remedying it, of the Courts who have addressed themselves with confidence to him.

"If the Government of her Britannic Majesty lays stress upon (relêre) the reaction which the troubles of Poland exercises on the peace of Europe, we must be still more struck with the influence which the agitations of Europe have in all times tad the power to exercise upon the tranquility of Poland. Since 1815 this country has witnessed the development of a material salid country has witnessed the development of a material welfare unknown until then in her annals, while other States have in the same interval in her annals, while other States have in the same interval undergone many interior crises. This repose was only troubled in 1830 by the consequences of commotions coming from abroad. E ghteen years later, in 1848, white almost the whole of Europe was convulsed by the revolution, the kingd on of Poland was able to preserve its tranquility. We are persuaded that it would be the same at present were it not for the continual instigations of the party of cosmopolitan revolution. If this party, every where devoted to the overthrow of order, at present concentrates all its activity upon Poland, a grave error would be committed in supposing that its apprations will atop short at that limit. What it seeks there is a lever to overturn the rest of Europe.

res of Europe.
"Those Cabinets which attach importance to recing the kingdom of Poland return a moment earlier to the condi-tion of a durable peace cannot therefore more certainly ensure the realization of this desire than by laboring, on their side, to appease the moral and material di-order which it is sought to propagate in Europe, and thus to ex-baust the main source of the agitations at which their forehaust the main source of the agreement at which there is sight is alarmed. We entertain the firm hope that in strengthening in this respect the ties which bind them together they will effectually serve the cause of peace and of

the general interests.
"I have the honor to request that you will communicate a copy of this despatch to the Principal Secretary of State of her Britannic Majesty.

" Receive, &c. GORTSCHAKOFF." MORE GOOD NEWS FROM THE SOUTHWEST.

CAPTURE OF JACKSON, (MISS.)

MEMPHIS, MAY 17, 9 P. M -General Grant defeated

Grigge' brigade at Raymond on Tuesday, 12 h instant. The rebel loss is admitted in their papers at seven hundred. The next day Griggs, reinforced by N. H. T. Walker, of Georgia, was attacked at Mississippi Springs, and was driven in towards Jackson. On Thursday a telegram was received at Grenada from Clinton that the Federals had taken Jackson from the east. Probably a cavalry move-

Gen. Joseph J. huson arrived at Jackson on the 13th. and went out towards Vicksburg with three brigades. He must have been west of Jackson when the capture was made by our forces. MURFREESBORO, MAY 18 -The Chattinooga Rebel of

esterday (16th instant) has been received here. It con-

the intention that the mail bag should be forwarded to its destination without the seal being broken?

Earl RUSSELL was understood to reply in the affirmative.